

Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project

DDMHS, Weeks Building, 103 South Main Street, Waterbury, VT 05671-1601 (802-241-2638)

MEMORANDUM

TO: Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project
Advisory Group and Interested Parties

FROM: John Pandiani
Janet Bramley
Alice Maynard

DATE: December 27, 2002

RE: Parents' Evaluation of Children's Services Programs

The attached pages provide an overview of the results of the fourth in our series of consumer and stakeholder surveys regarding the performance of community mental health Children's Services Programs in Vermont. This survey asked parents of child and adolescent service recipients to evaluate the Medicaid reimbursed services provided by the mental health programs during September 2001 through March 2002 to their children.

The attached pages describe the study, summarize the results on the regional and statewide level, and provide item-by-item rates for each region of the state. In addition, the results of this survey are compared to the results of previous surveys of educators, child protection (SRS) workers, and adolescent service recipients.

A detailed technical report that includes detailed results and discussion of methodology is available on the DDMHS web site at (<http://www.state.vt.us/dmh/Data/02parentstechnicalreport.pdf>). If you have questions comments, please contact Alice Maynard (DDMHS Child, Adolescent and Family Unit; 802-241-2609; amaynard@ddmhs.state.vt.us), Janet Bramley (Performance Indicator Project; 802-241-2659; jbramley@ddmhs.state.vt.us), or pip@ddmhs.state.vt.us.

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For copies of summary reports of the findings of our survey of...

...children served, go to (www.state.vt.us/dmh/Data/PIPs/2000/pip102000.pdf).

...educators, go to (www.state.vt.us/dmh/Data/PIPs/2002/pip020102.pdf).

...child protection workers, go to (www.state.vt.us/dmh/Data/PIPs/2001/pip030901.pdf).

For copies of detailed reports of the findings and methodology of our survey of...

...children served, go to (www.state.vt.us/dmh/Data/99kidstechnicalreport.pdf).

...educators, go to (www.state.vt.us/dmh/Data/01edtechnicalreport.pdf).

...child protection workers, go to (www.state.vt.us/dmh/Data/01srstechnicalreport.pdf).

EVALUATION OF CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

By the Parents of Children Served in Vermont September 2001- March 2002

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY OF RESULTS

During spring 2002, the Child and Family Unit of the Vermont Department of Developmental and Mental Health Services invited the parents of children who had recently received community mental health services to complete a survey to evaluate child and adolescent mental health programs in Vermont's ten regional Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs). Surveys were sent to parents of all children up to the age of 18 who received at least three Medicaid reimbursed services during the period September 2001 through March 2002. In total, 800 (29%) of the potential pool of 2,788 deliverable surveys were returned. Out of these, 10 respondents returned questionnaires with comments only. This left 790 (28%) useable surveys for quantitative analysis (See Appendix V).

The parent survey consists of twenty-six fixed alternative items and four open-ended items designed to provide information that would help stakeholders to compare the performance of child and adolescent mental health programs in Vermont. The survey instrument was based on the MHSIP Consumer Survey developed by a multi-state work group and modified as a result of input from Vermont stakeholders (see Appendix II).

Methodology

In order to facilitate comparison of Vermont's ten child and adolescent mental health programs, parents' responses to twenty-six fixed alternative items were combined into five scales. These scales focus on **overall** consumer evaluation of program performance, and evaluation of program performance with regard to **outcomes, quality, services, and staff**. In order to provide an unbiased comparison across programs, survey results were statistically adjusted to remove the effect of dissimilarities among the client populations served by different community programs. Measures of statistical significance were also adjusted to account for the proportion of all potential subjects who responded to the survey. (For details of scale construction and adjustment, see Appendix IV.) Reports of significance are at the 95% confidence level ($p < .05$). The percentages of parents making positive and negative narrative comments in response to the open-ended questions are noted in this report. A more detailed analysis of the content of the comments of parents and other stakeholders will be issued in a separate report.

Overall Results

The parents of children served by child and adolescent mental health programs in Vermont rated their programs very favorably. Statewide, on the *overall* measure of program performance, 81% of the parents evaluated the programs positively. Some aspects of program performance, however, were rated more favorably than others. Fixed alternative items related to *staff*, for instance, received the most favorable responses (87% favorable), followed by *services* (81% favorable) and *quality* (80% favorable). Items related to *outcomes* (62% favorable) received the lowest ratings. Additional comments about program performance were offered by 77% of the parents. When these comments were coded as positive or negative, it was found that significantly more parents made positive comments (66%) than negative comments (47%). Notably, all scale scores were higher than scores recorded in recent surveys of other stakeholders.

Overview of Differences Among Programs

In order to compare parents' evaluations of child and adolescent mental health programs in the ten CMHCs, ratings of individual programs on each of five composite scales were compared to the median of the regional scores (referred to in this report as the statewide median) for each scale. Although all programs received high scores, the results of this survey indicate that there were some significant differences in parents' evaluations of some of the state's ten child and adolescent community mental health programs (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Positive Evaluation of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs By Parents of Children Served in Vermont September 2001 - March 2002

Agency	Overall	Staff	Quality	Services	Outcomes
Chittenden					
Rutland					
Southeast					
Addison					
Bennington					
Lamoille					
Northeast					
Orange					
Washington					
Northwest					
Key Higher than statewide median No difference Lower than statewide median					

The child and adolescent mental health program in Chittenden County received the most favorable parent assessment in the state, scoring better than the statewide median on two of the five scales. The child and adolescent mental health programs in Rutland and the Southeast region each scored better than the statewide median on one of the five scales. The child and adolescent mental health program in the Northwest region was rated below the statewide median on two scales. Parents' evaluations of six of the other programs were not statistically different from the statewide median rating on any of the scales.

The results of this evaluation of child and adolescent mental health programs in Vermont need to be considered in conjunction with other measures of program performance in order to obtain a balanced picture of the quality of care provided to children and adolescents with mental health needs and their families in Vermont.

STATEWIDE RESULTS

The majority of parents of children served by child and adolescent mental health programs at CMHCs in Vermont rated their programs favorably. (Table 2 provides an item-by-item summary of responses to the fixed alternative questions.)

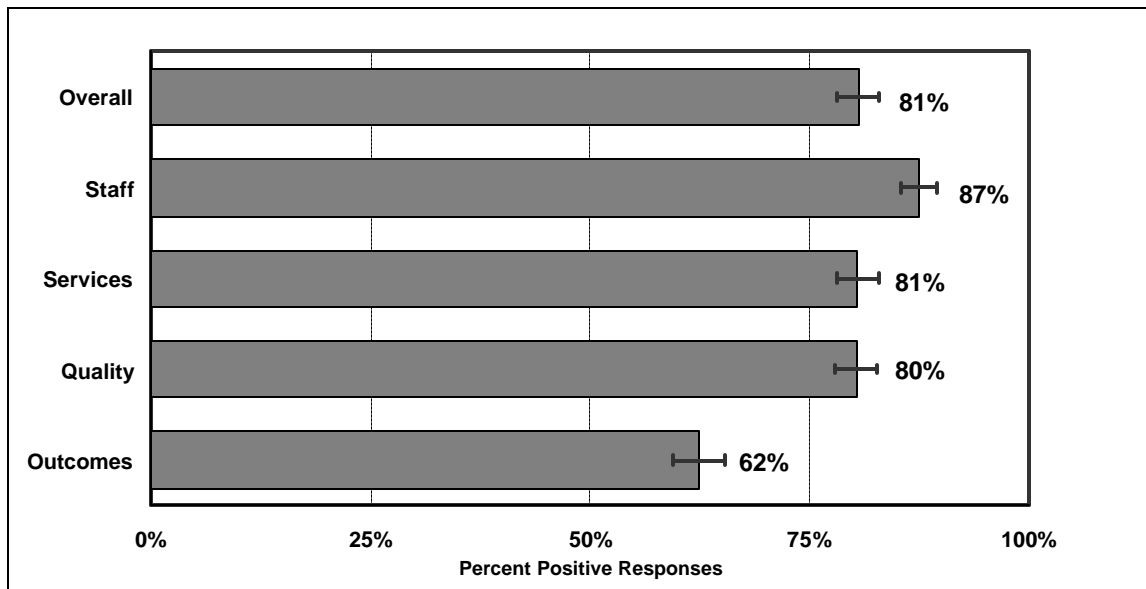
The most favorably rated items all related to staff "Staff spoke with me in a way that I understood (92% positive), "Staff treated me with respect" (91%), "We like the staff who work with us" (89%), "Staff respected my wishes about who received information about us" (88%) and, "Staff listened to what I have to say" (86%). Other favorably rated aspects of care included the convenience of the location of services (88%), and two items relating to respect for culture/ethnicity (85%) and respect for religious/spiritual beliefs (84%).

Eighty-three percent of the parents agreed or strongly agreed that, "The services we received from <CMHC name> were helpful to my child and family".

The least favorably rated items related to outcomes as a result of mental health services. Fifty-four percent felt that "My child is better able to cope when things go wrong" and 55% agreed that, "I am satisfied with family life right now."

There were significant differences in parents' ratings of child and adolescent mental health programs on the five scales derived from responses to the Vermont survey (Figure 2). Eighty-one percent of parents rated programs favorably *Overall*. The *Staff* scale (87% favorable) received significantly more favorable responses than the *Services* and *Quality* scales (81% and 80% favorable). All three of these subscales received significantly higher scores than the *Outcomes* scale (62% favorable).

Figure 2. Statewide Positive Evaluation of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs by Parents of Children Served in Vermont September 2001 - March



2002

Table 1**Parent Survey 2002: Response Rates by Program****Evaluation of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs By Parents
of Children Served September 2001 to March 2002 in Vermont**

Region/Provider ³	Number						Response Rate	
	Mailed	Deliverable	Refusals	No Response	Returned ¹	Useable Surveys ²	Returned ¹	Analyzed ²
Statewide	3,189	2,788	14	1,988	800	790	29%	28%
Addison -CSAC	363	335	2	224	111	110	33%	33%
Bennington -UCS	222	201	0	140	61	60	30%	30%
Chittenden -HCHS	676	589	7	445	144	142	24%	24%
Lamoille -LCMHS	40	32	0	23	9	9	28%	28%
Northeast -NKHS	357	303	0	224	79	79	26%	26%
Northwest -NCSS	310	271	0	190	81	78	30%	29%
Orange -CMC	242	222	0	150	72	72	32%	32%
Rutland -RMHS	178	162	1	112	50	50	31%	31%
Southeast -HCRSSV	415	328	1	234	94	91	29%	28%
Washington -WCMHS	386	345	3	246	99	99	29%	29%

¹ All responses to survey including those who supplied comments but did not complete fixed response questions.

² Questionnaires that had been completed and used for analysis.

³ Appendix 6 gives the full name and location of each of the ten designated CMHCs.

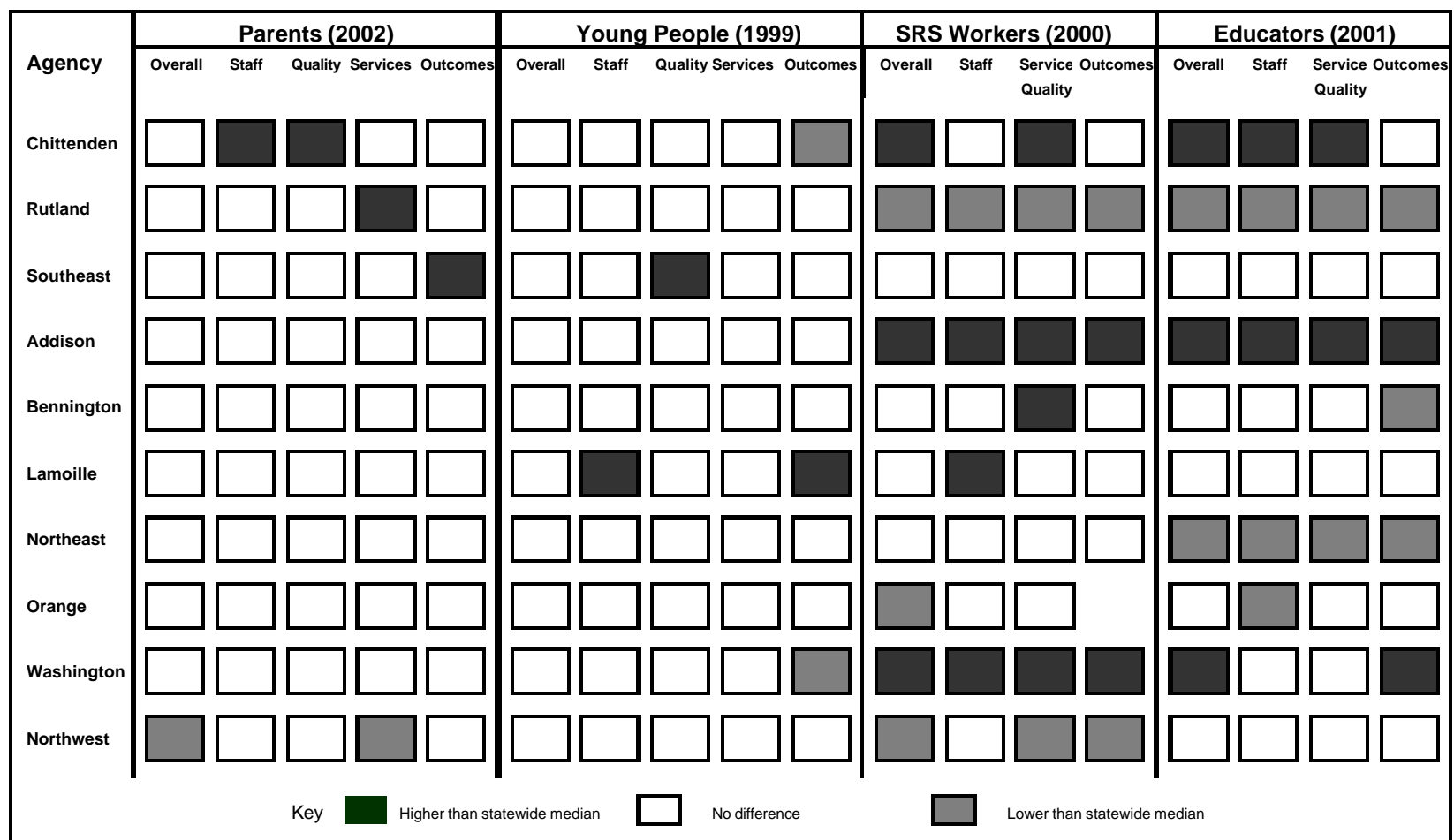
Table 2

**Parent Survey 2002:
Positive Responses to Individual Fixed Alternative Questions by Program**

State	Addison	Bennington	Chittenden	Lamoille	Northeast	Northwest	Orange	Rutland	Southeast	Washington	
21. Staff spoke with me in a way that I understood	92%	88%	95%	96%	100%	94%	87%	92%	94%	93%	91%
19. Staff treated me with respect	91%	92%	97%	95%	100%	87%	85%	93%	94%	87%	93%
14. We like the staff who work with us	89%	91%	90%	93%	89%	81%	87%	92%	98%	82%	88%
18. Staff respected my wishes about who received information about us	88%	84%	88%	90%	89%	87%	84%	89%	96%	87%	88%
12. The location of my mental health services was convenient	88%	88%	90%	85%	89%	94%	82%	89%	90%	89%	86%
17. The staff listened to what I have to say	86%	83%	81%	94%	100%	83%	81%	86%	94%	84%	82%
22. Staff were sensitive to my cultural/ethnic background	85%	85%	83%	86%	100%	85%	80%	90%	93%	82%	84%
20. Staff respected my family's religious/spiritual beliefs	84%	80%	86%	85%	80%	84%	83%	90%	93%	80%	84%
1. The services we received from <CMHC name> were helpful to my child and family	83%	78%	83%	86%	89%	77%	78%	86%	86%	87%	82%
13. Services were available at times convenient for me	81%	85%	92%	78%	89%	78%	81%	81%	82%	81%	78%
26. I would recommend this mental health center to a friend who needed help	80%	79%	78%	88%	56%	79%	78%	78%	84%	81%	75%
24. The services I received from <CMHC name> this year were of good quality	80%	78%	83%	86%	67%	78%	78%	75%	80%	81%	79%
16. The staff asked me what I wanted/needed	80%	73%	78%	89%	100%	78%	75%	82%	88%	74%	79%
8. I like the services we received from <CMHC name>	79%	76%	82%	85%	67%	75%	77%	75%	86%	80%	82%
25. If I needed mental health services in the future, I would use this mental health center again	79%	77%	81%	86%	56%	78%	78%	73%	82%	81%	76%
23. Overall, I am satisfied with the services my child received	78%	77%	78%	82%	67%	77%	74%	79%	74%	78%	76%
9. I helped choose my child's treatment goals	76%	73%	73%	78%	89%	80%	71%	78%	80%	75%	75%
10. I helped choose my child's services	75%	69%	79%	81%	100%	75%	67%	78%	80%	73%	71%
15. The staff knew how to help my child	73%	75%	75%	76%	56%	73%	65%	75%	74%	70%	74%
11. The services my child and/or family received were right for us	72%	72%	73%	78%	67%	75%	63%	71%	70%	71%	70%
5. My child is doing better in school and/or work	66%	66%	67%	66%	75%	54%	71%	63%	69%	67%	67%
2. My child is doing better at handling daily life	64%	63%	69%	70%	75%	61%	63%	59%	63%	64%	64%
4. My child gets along better with friends and other people	64%	64%	59%	69%	75%	62%	58%	57%	62%	67%	67%
3. My child gets along better with family members	60%	64%	59%	56%	71%	59%	53%	60%	72%	61%	62%
7. I am satisfied with our family life right now	55%	51%	50%	59%	38%	56%	53%	52%	57%	57%	58%
6. My child is better able to cope when things go wrong	54%	53%	55%	59%	63%	53%	45%	56%	55%	53%	55%
Average	77%	76%	78%	80%	78%	75%	73%	77%	80%	76%	77%

Figure 3. Multi-informant Comparative Evaluation of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs

Positive Evaluation of Programs by Parents, Young People, SRS Workers and Educators



Note: Outcomes scale scores for Orange are not reported for SRS case workers because of low respondent numbers .